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ESR

Ellet Joseph Waggoner

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# 1899

## March 2, 1899

**“True Sabbath Observance” American Sentinel 14, 9.**

E. J. Waggoner

When the Jews persecuted Jesus for the good deed done to the impotent man, He justified Himself by saying, “My Father worketh hitherto, and I work.” That was a real justification of His act, for to do that which God does is the most perfect righteousness. Moreover, the acts of Jesus were not simply copies of what the Father did; if they were, then there would be in them no lessons or help for us, for it would show no connection between Him and frail human beings. But He said, “I do nothing of Myself;” “but the Father that dwelleth in Me, He doeth the works.” *John 8:28; 14:10*. There is no man so weak that he cannot let God work in him to will and to do of His good pleasure.*AMS March 2, 1899, page 132.1*

Jesus was accused of violating the Sabbath, and He did indeed break the Jewish Sabbath, but not the Sabbath of the Lord. The Jewish Sabbath consisted in formal cessation of all labour on the seventh day of the week, even though human life was lost thereby. It was simply a yoke, a burden, an act of penance by which they thought, to make themselves righteous. It had nothing in common with the Sabbath of the Lord except that it was kept on the same day of the week. The Lord’s Sabbath is absolute rest in Him and His word,-dependence on His life; and since His life is activity,-service for others,-it follows that true Sabbath-keeping may sometimes involve severe physical labour. How can one tell what works are lawful on the Sabbath day, and what are not?-No list of lawful and unlawful works can be given, but this principle will guide whatever labour is necessary for the welfare of suffering humanity, whether the disease be of body or of soul, and from which the labourer derives absolutely no profit or benefit except the consciousness of God’s presence, is proper Sabbath labour. True Sabbath keeping is rest in God,-absolute and unqualified acceptance of His word.*AMS March 2, 1899, page 132.2*

“My Father worketh hitherto, and I work.” How does God work, and how had Jesus done the work for which He was now persecuted?—By His word. Mark this: it was not as a man works by giving orders to another. No man may flatter himself that he is keeping the Sabbath while others are labouring in his employ. Whosoever does a thing by another does it himself. It is not the way that God works, and it was not in that way that Jesus healed the impotent man. He did not speak the word which set somebody else to work, but *His word itself did the work*. “By the word of the Lord were the heavens made, and all the host of them by the breath of His mouth.” “He spake, and it was.” *Psalms 33:6, 9*. This miracle of Jesus was therefore simply a manifestation of the creative power of God’s word. *AMS March 2, 1899, page 132.3*

In six days God created the heavens and the earth; and then He rested on the seventh day, not because to have continued the work of creation would have been a sin, but for the good reason that it was all done. The word, however, continued to work in upholding that which it had created. All the works of God since that time (so far at least as this earth is concerned) are simply to uphold or to restore, and the works which He does for us and through us are to the same effect. Keeping the Sabbath of the Lord is simply the absolute resting in God’s finished work, and allowing Him to put them into us. The absolute ceasing from all our own works on the seventh day,—from everything by which we may get gain,—is an indication of our trust in God for “life, and breath, and all things.” If one dare not trust God to keep him if he should rest on what is to all the world (and even the greater part of the professed Christian world,) the busiest day of the week, how can he persuade himself that he is trusting for eternity? *AMS March 2, 1899, page 132.4*

## April 6, 1899

**“Spiritual Impotence of Civil Government” American Sentinel 14, 14.**

E. J. Waggoner

“Present Truth.” (London, England.)

A motion was lately made in the House of Lords that a report be provided showing the number of cases in which confessional boxes have been introduced into the Church of England. Lord Salisbury, while agreeing to the request, pointed out that whatever steps were taken by the government, they were powerless to deal with any spiritual evil. He said:-*AMS April 6, 1899, page 211.1*

“If there are any means of repressing or discouraging the practice of habitual confession, they would deserve all our consideration. I fear, however, that you are undertaking an effort to *coerce consciences*, which greater powers have failed to effect, and that you are more likely to increase the disease than to stop it. but allow me to point out that this return will not tell you one hundredth part of the evil.*AMS April 6, 1899, page 211.2*

“If there is to be confession, which I most earnestly deprecate, I would rather have the open box in the church than the secret interview in the vestry. It is between these two that you have to choose, and my fear is, in the first place, that you will not get an accurate return of the boxes there are, because everybody who returns the existence of a box returns a confession that he has broken the law. You will not get people to do that; they will simply put your circular in the fire. And beyond that you will be giving a vicious stimulus to a certain mistaken spirit of religious courage which will most undoubtedly, and I think unfortunately, induce a more extended practice of the evil which you so justly deprecate.*AMS April 6, 1899, page 211.3*

“I greatly fear that if men wish to confess to men or-perhaps I should put it more accurately-if women wish to confess to men, all the power this Parliament possesses will not avail seriously to arrest the process. The power of arresting it lies with the

organization over which the right reverend prelates preside. It is for them to teach their flocks-they cannot do it too earnestly and too often-the evils which may attend habitual and systematic secret confession. But let us be careful lest we hinder their work, and prevent them from doing that which it is their proper charge to carry out, by bringing in the arm of the flesh which never yet beat down a religious error, and has often made the evil worse than before.”*AMS April 6, 1899, page 212.1*

Lord Salisbury recognizes that it is the work of the church to attend to matters of religion, and that the “arm of flesh” never yet mended matters. If the church is corrupt and powerless for good, it is only by reason of its unlawful connection with the world, and the first step in reform must be a separation from this entangling and corrupting alliance. If the church neglects its work, the State cannot take it up. It should not be necessary for a statesman to remind the church of this truth.*AMS April 6, 1899, page 212.2*

A merely political disestablishment will not suffice to correct the evil. The forbidden connection with the State arises out of a lack of faith in the power of the Word, and a sinful yielding to worldly influences. The friendship of the world is enmity with God (*James 4:4*), and the duty of every believer in the church is to repent and do the first works, not trusting in the arm of flesh, but returning to his first love. *Revelation 2:4, 5*. Christ loved the church and gave himself for it, and the church which loyally recognizes its obligation to its Lord will, forsaking all other, cleave only to him, content with the riches and the power which he bestows.*AMS April 6, 1899, page 212.3*

**April 27, 1899**

**“A Frank Admission” American Sentinel 14, 17.**

E. J. Waggoner

“Present Truth.” (London, Eng.)

A gentleman who has recently visited Rome writes ad follows in the *Christian World*:-AMS April 27, 1899, page 263.1

Rome would, if she had the power, still force her creeds by fire and faggot. I was talking ore, day while in Rome with a prelate of the Church on the question of heresy. “As a matter of fact,” I said to him, “I could not believe many of your doctrines. They are to me simply unbelievable.” “Ah, well,” he replied, “we distinguish in cases of heresy.” “In what way?” I asked. “Well,” he said, “there are two kinds of heresy-there is passive heresy and active heresy. Passive heresy is simply to doubt, but active heresy is to propagate the doubt. In the former case the Church is very merciful.” “But,” I asked, “suppose you as a Church had supreme power to-day as you once had, and suppose I felt it my duty to openly oppose certain articles of your faith. What would the Church do?” *“It would stop at nothing to stamp out the heresy,”* was his reply.AMS April 27, 1899, page 263.2

There is nothing to be surprised at in this, but there is danger that men will regard Rome as having a monopoly of the persecuting spirit. Persecution began with Cain. It was seen in Ishmael, and it will appear in everyone who is not born of the Spirit. As then, “he that was born after the flesh persecuted him that was born after the Spirit, even suit is now.” People may think that they will never persecute, but they certainly will unless they be born of the Spirit. Those who do not gather with Christ scatter abroad, and this is persecution. There is no such thing as “passive heresy” against the false doctrines of Rome.AMS April 27, 1899, page 263.3

## May 18, 1899

**“A Divine Protest Against War” American Sentinel 14, 20.**

E. J. Waggoner

“Present Truth.” (London, Eng.)

“Then Simon Peter having a sword, drew it, and smote the high priest’s servant, and cut off his right ear. The servant’s name was Malchus. Then said Jesus unto Peter, Put up thy sword into the sheath; the cup which my Father hath given me, shall I not drink it?”*AMS May 18, 1899, page 315.1*

Jesus had said to his disciples, and to us as well, “I say unto you, That ye resist not evil,” and here he showed that his words are to be taken in their plainest signification. If there was ever a place in the world when right was oppressed by might, here it was. If ever in this world the sword was drawn in a just cause, this was the time; yet Jesus rebuked it. Nothing else can be learned from this occurrence than that there are no possible circumstances under which it is justifiable to use weapons of warfare. Such sentiments as the following we find given very frequent and prominent place in religious journals:-*AMS May 18, 1899, page 315.2*

In the last resort,-when insult has been wantonly inflicted, when the obligations of honor have been wilfully repudiated, and when every resource of peaceful diplomacy has been exhausted,-no self-respecting nation will be found unprepared to maintain its dignity and enforce its rights by appeal to arms.*AMS May 18, 1899, page 315.3*

Let that serve for those nations and peoples who have no other method of maintaining their honor and dignity than that which is common to the brutes. Jesus showed that there is a better way to maintain one’s dignity. He was insulted and abused, yet never did the native dignity of His character assert itself and shine forth more conspicuously, and so victoriously, too, than when He reproved Peter for using the sword. Unarmed, He stood before that crowd of armed men, and demonstrated Himself to be their Master. Every



Christian who is such indeed, has the same armor that He had. Read *Ephesians 6:13*. For professed Christians, therefore, to take the sword in self-defense, or for any other purpose, is to admit that they know nothing of “the power of Jesus’ name.” *AMS May 18, 1899, page 315.4*

## July 13, 1899

**“The True Peace Conference” American Sentinel 14, 27.**

E. J. Waggoner

There is a council of peace continually in session, and it is the only council that can accomplish definite results. “Thus speaketh the Lord of hosts, saying, Behold the Man whose name is THE BRANCH; and He shall grow up out of His place, and He shall build the temple of the Lord; even He shall build the temple of the Lord; and He shall bear the glory; and shall sit and rule upon His throne; and He shall be a priest upon His throne; and the counsel of peace shall be between them both.” *Zechariah 6:12, 13*. The true counsel of peace is between God and Christ on the throne of God in heaven. The God of peace has sent Jesus, “the Prince of peace,” who is “our peace,” preaching peace, “peace to him that is far off, and to him that is near.” *Isaiah 57:19*. AMS July 13, 1899, page 419.1

Christ has left His peace with men, but not as the world gives it. Whoever will let the peace of God rule in his heart (*Colossians 3:15*), by receiving and trusting absolutely in the Word of God, will be kept by “the peace of God which passeth all understanding.” *Philippians 4:6, 7*. This is the peace of righteousness, which comes from hearkening to the commandments of God. *Isaiah 48:18; Romans 5:1*. Only God can impart this peace, and it is the only peace that is peace indeed. It is perfect peace, and it is as lasting as eternity. AMS July 13, 1899, page 419.2

Now it is not this peace that the delegates of the nations have met to confer about at The Hague, and consequently they are imagining a vain thing. If it were the true peace that they were conferring about they would be having a religious meeting pure and simple seeking the blessing of the fullness of the Holy Spirit. “What a strange thing that would be for a congress composed of delegates from all the nations,” all will exclaim. Indeed it would be a strange thing, and an impossible thing; for if they were assembled for that purpose, their action could not be representative. Each one could secure peace for himself only, as an individual. Their action would

bind nobody else. It would be a grand thing, however, if they would seek peace in that way, for then something would be accomplished; a few men, at least, would secure peace.*AMS July 13, 1899, page 419.3*

“There is no peace, saith my Lord, to the wicked.” *Isaiah 57:21*. It is only by personal faith in Christ that righteousness comes; therefore it is evident that to nations on this earth there can never be peace. Only by submitting to the mild sway of Him that sitteth on the throne in the heavens, and acknowledging and keeping His laws, can there be peace. That would result in there being only one King over all, which will be the case in the world to come, when “the kingdoms of this world are become the kingdoms of our Lord, and of His Christ; and He shall reign forever and ever.” *Revelation 11:15.AMS July 13, 1899, page 419.4*

It is not necessary, therefore, not even profitable, to call a conference of all the nations, in order to have peace. Each person may have a successful peace conference by himself, wherever he is. God has spoken peace, and Christ has been sent with the message. We have only to listen and accept. “I will hear what God the Lord will speak; for He will speak peace unto His people, and to His saints.”*AMS July 13, 1899, page 419.5*

**“Paganism and Sunday” American Sentinel 14, 27.**

E. J. Waggoner

“Present Truth.” (London, Eng.)

The *Church Family Newspaper* of the 16 June contains the following bit of information appropriate to the season:-*AMS July 13, 1899, page 422.1*

“The near approach of Midsummer Day calls to mind the fact that that day and the preceding eve, now dedicated to St. John the Baptist, have been regarded as a holy season even from remote pagan times. There seems to be little doubt that one custom which was observed in our own time, and may be still in remote parts of Ireland and Scotland—that of lighting, fires on the hills on

Midsummer Eve-had come down to us from the time when the sun-god Bel, or Baal, was worshipped in these islands. Such fires were common over the greater part of Europe-from the cold borders of Lapland to the Levant.”*AMS July 13, 1899, page 422.2*

The same custom is continued till the present time in Norway and Sweden, where Midsummer Day is quite a holiday. In connection with the foregoing, the following from the same paper, with regard to Stonehenge in Salisbury Plain, fits very well:-*AMS July 13, 1899, page 422.3*

There is now no doubt of the character of this mighty ruin. Baal worship was at one time almost the universal religion, and this was one of the great temples. It was oriented so that the rays of the rising sun at midsummer should fall upon its sacred altar. It would be rash to guess its age for it may be older than the time of Elijah. Very little is known of the religious teaching of the Druids, but they were believed to have been Baal, that is, suit worshippers.... Sixty years ago I heard boys sing in the streets a song which is a portion of a Druidical hymn to the rising sun. In English it sounds like nonsense, and they had no idea what they were saying; it was a wonderful survival of pagan Britain, and Elijah may have heard this chorus, sung by the priests of Baal, three thousand years ago. In one or two remote parts of Britain, the custom of commemorating the triumph of the sun on June 21 still continues, with dancing and bonfires. The peasants are probably innocent of the origin of this custom.*AMS July 13, 1899, page 422.4*

Many people are observing pagan customs, wholly ignorant of their origin, thinking indeed that they are Christian because “the Church” has adopted them and sanctions them. How many realise the connection between Christmas and Midsummer Day? The observance of the latter is admitted to be solely of pagan origin Sun worshippers celebrated it as the day of the greatest triumph of their god, the day on which the sun was longest and highest above the horizon. Just six months later, after a period of progressive daily decrease of sunshine, when the sun seemed to be going away, they celebrated the time of the beginning of its return, its birth, as they called it.*AMS July 13, 1899, page 422.5*

Now when the bishops of the early church, more anxious to secure a large following than to win men from the superstitions of paganism, saw how firmly the heathen were wedded to these sun-festivals, they resolved to adopt them, so that the heathen could profess Christianity without making any violent change in their habits and customs. But of course it would not do to continue them as emblems of the worship of the ruler of the day. So, remembering that Jesus was just six months younger than John the Baptist, they hit on the plan of calling Midsummer Day the birthday of John the Baptist, and the winter celebration the birthday of Jesus, quieting their consciences, if they had any conscience in the matter, by the fact that Jesus is "the Sun of righteousness." So we have Christmas, a purely heathen festival, firmly fixed in the Church. When so much of sun worship had been adopted, it was but a short step to the adoption of Sunday, "the venerable day of the sun." *AMS July 13, 1899, page 422.6*

**October 26, 1899**

**“How to Change a Bad Law” American Sentinel 14, 42.**

E. J. Waggoner

[This question, which engages so much attention here among promoters of reforms in political and social life, is ably discussed and clearly answered in *Present Truth*, of London, Eng., as follows:-]  
*AMS October 26, 1899, page 667.1*

By a bad law we do not mean a law that some people do not like, but a law that requires something that is wrong. Many people dislike that which is good; and human nature is ever inclined to make itself the standard of goodness, and to say that whatever is opposed to its desires is bad; but our tastes and inclinations are not to be taken into account at all; there is one standard of right, and that is the law of God-God's own life. Whatever is contrary to God's Word-the word of life-is bad, and should be shunned as one would shun the plague. To obey a bad law is identical with breaking a good law.  
*AMS October 26, 1899, page 667.2*

Now there are laws that are bad. They are found to a greater or lesser extent in every nation. Such are the laws that are directly opposed to the law of God, although they may be in harmony with the sentiments of the majority of the people. In every nation there are also to be found men who are sorely distressed over the existence of such laws, and to exert themselves in various ways to have them repealed. This opposition usually takes the form of political agitation, of the same nature as that by which the laws were enacted, sometimes going even to the extent of armed rebellion and revolution. In some instances the opposition is apparently successful, but in most it is an open failure, and in no case is the success real and lasting.  
*AMS October 26, 1899, page 667.3*

At the present time in this country the burning question is that of ritualism in the Church. Inasmuch as the Established Church is in reality a State institution, so long as it remains an established church, dissenters as a rule feel that they have as much interest in

the controversy as have Churchmen. Accordingly both Protestant and Catholic journals discuss the question freely, but there is a great difference of opinion among anti-ritualists as to how the swelling flood of sacerdotalism in the Church is to be checked.*AMS October 26, 1899, page 667.4*

In the *Contemporary Review*, Dr. Guinness Rogers has an article on "The Archbishops and the Ritualists," in which he says, "I do not believe in coercive legislation, even in the interests of Protestantism." To this statement the *Methodist Times* takes exception. It should be stated that Dr. Rogers declares that "we shall resist all efforts to Romanize the establishment-that is, we shall do our utmost to prevent the present compromise from being altered in a sacerdotal direction." Whereupon the *Methodist Times* responds thus:-*AMS October 26, 1899, page 667.5*

But how does he propose to resist the Romanizers except by "coercive legislation"? At every period of history the only kind of suasion that has any effective influence over clerical extremists is legal suasion. In the last resort, as in the days of the Reformation, the House of Commons, representing the laity, must compel lawless priests to obey or resign.*AMS October 26, 1899, page 668.1*

It is not our purpose to enter into the controversy; but it is a duty to point out that since State legislation-politics in the Church-brought about the present state of things, State legislation, even though it be called into requisition for the purpose of reformation, can only perpetuate the existing evil, possibly under another form.*AMS October 26, 1899, page 668.2*

How then can any reform ever be effected? This is what we propose to show; and since nothing is so convincing as a case already worked out, we shall content ourselves with referring to an instance where a bad law was effectually changed.*AMS October 26, 1899, page 668.3*

Nebuchadnezzar, King of Babylon, the greatest king that the world ever saw, made a great image of gold, ninety feet high, and set it up in the plain of Dura, and then gathered the chief men from all parts of the world to come and fall down before it. Under threat of the

most terrible death if they disobeyed, all were commanded to fall down and worship the image at a given signal.*AMS October 26, 1899, page 668.4*

Here was a law directly contrary to God's law, which says: "Thou shalt not make unto thee any graven image, or any likeness of anything that is in heaven above, or that is in the earth beneath, or that is in the water under the earth; thou shalt not bow down thyself to them, nor serve them." It was therefore a bad law, although the most of the people had nothing against it. At least they obeyed it without question.*AMS October 26, 1899, page 668.5*

But there were three men who knew the law to be bad, and who knew that to obey it would be to sin against God; so while the others fell down and worshiped, they stood upright. We all know the story well. The king was very gracious toward them, and though they had not heeded his law, he was willing to give them another chance. But they gave him to understand that they were fully decided, and did not need any time to think over the matter. They said, "Be it known unto thee, O king, that we will not serve thy gods, nor worship the golden image which thou hast set up."*AMS October 26, 1899, page 668.6*

This was not disobedience but obedience. They were not law-breakers, but lawkeepers. The true law was, "Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God, and Him only shalt thou serve;" the king's law was in itself an act of despite to the law, so that when the three men refused to regard it, they were only showing their faithfulness to law.*AMS October 26, 1899, page 668.7*

Let it be noted, however, that these man were not rebellious. They did not attempt to raise any insurrection. They did not harangue the people about the injustice of the law, and the wickedness of the threatened punishment. They made no appeal for sympathy, but simply proclaimed the power of their God. They were not there to oppose the king, nor to defend themselves, but to honor God. So they refused to be disobedient to their Creator, and willingly allowed themselves to be bound and cast into the burning furnace.*AMS October 26, 1899, page 668.8*

Everybody knows the result. They fell down in the furnace, bound



hand and foot, but immediately stood up again, for the fire destroyed their bonds, and set them free. Rather, it demonstrated their freedom. It had no power over them. They walked about in the fire, with the Lord by their side, as comfortably as though they were promenading in the cool of a summer evening.*AMS October 26, 1899, page 668.9*

Then the king called them out, and bore witness before all the assembled rulers that these three men had changed the law. "Nebuchadnezzar spake, and said, Blessed be the God of Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego, who hath sent His angel, and delivered His servants that trusted in Him, and have changed the king's word." *Daniel 3:28*. There is no doubt but that the law was changed, abolished, for nobody was again commanded to worship the golden image. Nebuchadnezzar himself recognized God as the only One to be worshiped, and declared that these three captive Jews had changed his decree. Surely this was a wonderful deed.*AMS October 26, 1899, page 668.10*

How did they do it? As we have seen; they made no stir, they did not appeal to the people, they circulated no petitions, they did not plead, and they did not threaten. They used no coercive legislation, nor any other kind. How then did they succeed in getting the law changed? King Nebuchadnezzar himself tells us. He said, "They have changed the king's word, *and yielded their bodies that they might not serve nor worship any god, except their own God.*"*AMS October 26, 1899, page 668.11*

This confirms what we have said. They were not disobedient, but obedient. They were not rebellious, but yielding. They changed the laws by yielding their bodies to death, rather than do wrong. That was all, but was sufficient, for there is almighty power in righteousness.*AMS October 26, 1899, page 668.12*

**November 23, 1899**

**“The Trust about Infallibility” American Sentinel 14, 46.**

E. J. Waggoner

“Present Truth.” (London, Eng.)

The infallibility of the Pope of Rome is claimed by Monsignor Vaughan partly from the following text: “Lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world.” *Matthew 28:20*. “I will pray the Father, and He shall give you another Comforter, that He may abide with you for ever, even the Spirit of truth, whom the world cannot receive.” *John 16:16, 17*. “When He, the Spirit of truth is come, and He will guide you into all truth.” *John 16:13*. “He shall teach you all things, and bring all things to your remembrance, whatsoever I have said unto you.” *John 14:26*. *AMS November 23, 1899, page 732.1*

But all these things were spoken to all the disciples-to all believers, the church as a whole. There is no room for a pope of any kind, for the Holy Spirit is Christ’s representative, and He is sent to the whole church, and to each individual impartially. The humblest believer is therefore far better qualified to declare the truth than the Pope of Rome is, for each believer has all the advantages that the Pope can possibly have, with this additional advantage, that he does not profess to be pope. Self-exaltation shuts away the revelation of the Holy Spirit. Christ is meek and lowly in heart, and the truth of God is revealed unto babes. *Matthew 11:25, 29*. “If any man willeth to do His will, he shall know of the doctrine.” *John 7:17*. *AMS November 23, 1899, page 732.2*

## December 21, 1899

**“A Proposed Christmas Truce in South Africa” American Sentinel 14, 50.**

E. J. Waggoner

“Present Truth.” (London, Eng.)

The incongruity of two “Christian nations” engaged in deadly conflict at the same time celebrating what they suppose to be the birthday of the Prince of peace, and listening to the message, “Peace on earth, goodwill to men,” appeals very forcibly to some people, and accordingly it has been suggested to the authorities in South Africa, both at Cape Town and the Transvaal, that “on that day, at any rate, there should be peace from midnight to midnight.” *AMS December 21, 1899, page 796.1*

It is sad that any Christian should have so little knowledge of the Gospel as not to see the incongruity of such a proposal. What a caricature of peace it would be, what a travesty of upon the Gospel of peace, for two armies to cease all hostilities on midnight of the 24th of December, expecting to resume them at midnight on the 25th, and in the meantime solemnly to announce that they were celebrating the birthday of the Prince of peace! It would be awful mockery. *AMS December 21, 1899, page 796.2*

The proposal, evidently made in all sincerity, shows how much the Gospel has come to be considered as a mere form and ceremony, as satisfied by the observance of certain days and certain ceremonies. Such religion is essentially heathenism, differing from that which is ordinarily known as such only in kind. If the suggestion were adopted, it would doubtless be hailed as an evidence of the hold that Christianity has on the people of the world, whereas it would simply show how greatly people are controlled by superstition in spite of centuries of Gospel preaching. We are reminded of the man who reckoned himself a good Christian, for while he would usually swear till the air was blue with oaths, he never swore on Sunday! *AMS December 21, 1899, page 796.3*

Even supposing that the 25th of December were the day on which

Jesus was born in Bethlehem, which it most certainly is not, the mere observance of that day, in any way whatsoever, would have no element of Christianity in it. Christianity is a life, and if it exists at all in any person, must be the whole of his life. People often have enough perception of the fitness of things to say that it is useless to give one day of the week to God and all the rest to the world and the devil; but the fact is, such a thing is impossible. Such an idea is on a par with the stories of dead men who on certain occasions come out of their graves and walk about. It is just as impossible for a man to render real acceptable service to God on only one day in the year, or in the week, and to serve himself and the devil all the other days, as it would be for a man to come from the grave in full vigor one day in each year or each week, and lie lifeless all the rest of the time.*AMS December 21, 1899, page 797.1*

God can raise the dead, but when He does it, it is to the end that death shall no more have dominion over them. The Spirit of God can quicken into life those who are “dead in trespasses and sins;” but He does not do this periodically. Christ “ever liveth,” but His life is nothing to us unless He lives in us; and while He is longsuffering, and will come back even after having been received and again thrust out, it is not conceivable nor possible that any soul should open the door at midnight to receive Him, with the express understanding that He must leave at the next midnight to come again if called for at any time. That would be but to make a plaything of the Lord.*AMS December 21, 1899, page 797.2*

The birth of Christ must be regarded, but not by celebrating a day. We are left in utter ignorance of the day when Jesus was born in Bethlehem, so that there need be no temptation to substitute the celebration of it for real acceptance of Him; just as God did not allow the Israelites to see any form when He talked with them from Sinai so that they could not attempt to make a likeness of Him, and substitute that for Him. *Deuteronomy 4:15-19*. Yet men have presumed to do both. The birth of Christ is to and for each individual. If Jesus be not born in a man’s heart and life, it will be of no avail to him that He was born in Judea nineteen hundred years ago.*AMS December 21, 1899, page 797.3*

